Ardusa

A Grammar of the Ardusan Languages

by Ian A. Cook

last edited
May 5, 2019

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Ardusa is a fictional landmass set in a fictional constructed world. All of the languages spoken on Ardusa, such as Tavonic, Alnuric, Redodhic, and others, are themselves fictional, spoken by fictional groups of people, and as such are not related to any naturally existing languages. These languages' vocabularies are entirely *a priori*, which means that no words are derived from the vocabularies of real-world languages. That being said, these languages are intended to be naturalistic, so similarities will occur. Nonetheless, any actual duplication is accidental.

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Abbreviations

1p	first person plural		IND	indicative
1pc	first person paucal		INF	infinitive
1s	first person singular		INT	interrogative
2p	second person plural		IPFV	imperfective
2pc	second person paucal		MED	medial
2s	second person singular		NEG	negative
3p	third person plural		NMZ	nominalizer
3pc	third person paucal		NPST	nonpast
3s	third person singular		PASS	passive
ABS	absolutive		PC	paucal
ACC	accusative		PFV	perfective
ACT	active		PL	plural
AN	animate		PRG	progressive
DAT	dative		PST	past
DIM	diminutive		PTCP	participle
ERG	ergative		RTSP	retrospective
GEN	genitive		SBJV	subjunctive
IMP	imperative		SG	singular
IN	inanimate		TOP	topic

*	ungrammatical
?	grammatically questionable
!	semantically odd or ill-formed

Acknowledgments

Preface

This document provides a detailed grammatical description of the languages of Ardusa, a fictional landmass set in a fictional constructed world. This project serves as a method for linguistic research, as an intellectual exercise, as an outlet for creative and artistic expression, and as a setting for potential future works of fiction. It is intended primarily for my own personal use and entertainment, though others with similar linguistic interests will hopefully find it interesting and entertaining as well. I have chosen to use LaTeX to typeset this grammar because it provides a way to be clear, consistent, and organized. Further, since LaTeX uses plain text files, it allows me to use Git for version control so I can keep track of changes over time.

My goal is to build a series of languages with naturalistic grammars that are linguistically plausible and consistent, yet also original in their content and details. This project consists of three distinct and unrelated language families, each of which contains one or more related languages. Some elements of these languages are influenced by existing languages such as Japanese, Finnish, Navajo, Nahuatl, and Arabic, but they are not meant to simply mimic these, instead drawing this inspiration into new forms along with entirely *a priori* lexicons. Ardusa and the Ardusan languages is an ongoing project with no fixed endpoint or goal.

This concise grammar is my attempt to document the Ardusan languages in an official and systematic way, and as comprehensively as possible. It is intended to be the official description of the languages. This is a concise grammar because, admittedly, I am not a professional linguist, nor have I taken any linguistics coursework. My education in linguistics consists solely of self-guided research, which means invariably my knowledge will be limited. It is a concise grammar because, frankly, I don't know enough to go into greater detail. That being said, I'm always eager to learn, and will always accept feedback. Again, learning is one of the reasons for this endeavor.

Since the purpose of writing this grammar is to provide a comprehensive description of the Ardusan languages, not to teach them to others, it is not intended to serve as a textbook or as a way to learn the languages. I have organized topics thematically, rather than curricularly, and I employ technical terms when they are precise, accurate, and appropriate. I have not conducted a formal analysis of the languages, but I have worked to make it as descriptive as possible.

The discussion is ordered from the smallest elements of the languages to the largest. It begins with a description of each language's place in Ardusa followed by their phonologies, it addresses morphology and the combining of words, it discusses vocabulary and derivation, and it explains syntax and discourse. The final chapter serves as a reference grammar, summarizing all of the previous chapters. There are

also several appendices describing the conceptual metaphors that organize much of the lexicons, the naming practices of the fictional speakers of these languages, several translation examples, and lexicons. Other resources include a glossary of linguistic glossing abbreviations, a bibliography, and an index.

This document uses several linguistics conventions to clarify meaning. Any reference to specific orthographic spelling is marked with angled brackets, such as ⟨hin⟩. Pronunciations are usually given phonemically, in which case they are marked with slashes, such as /hin/. Phonetic pronunciations are used only when conveying specific details like the difference between allophones, and are marked with square brackets, such as [çin]. Both phonemic and phonetic pronunciations are given using the International Phonetic Alphabet. Foreign words are always written in italics, such as *lu*. English glosses are surrounded by single quotes, such as 'and'. If a morphological gloss is provided in-line, it is surrounded by parentheses, such as (INF).

Many short examples are provided in one single line.

(1)   Tavonic: *šek* /ʃek/ 'ran' (run-IND.PST.PFV)

Longer examples are usually provided with a multi-line, or interlinear, gloss. In these examples, the optional first line will indicate which language the example is in, if it is not clear from context. The next line presents the text in that language, followed by the pronunciation. After this, the text is broken into its component morphemes, and the following line provides a morpheme-by-morpheme gloss. The final line provides an English translation of the example phrase or sentence.

(2)   Tavonic
       Nan oko šeðo.
       /nan oˈko ˈʃe.ðo/

       nan=   *oko*   *š-eðo*
       PL.AN.TOP= dog   run-IND.PST.PRG

       'The dogs were running.'

As shown in example 2, morpheme glosses are labeled with abbreviations in SMALL CAPS. A full list of all glossing abbreviations is given on page ix. A hyphen marks a morpheme boundary within a word that is shared between the text and its gloss, while a period marks a boundary present in only one or the other, including when a single word in the text corresponds to multiple words in its gloss. Clitics are marked with an equals sign, reduplication with a tilde, discontinuous affixes (e.g., infixes, circumfixes) with angle brackets, and morphemes that cannot be easily separated out with backslashes.

The LaTeX source code for this grammar and a copy of this PDF are available in a public ⬡ GitHub repository. Undoubtedly, there will be errors in this document. If you notice any, please feel free to open an issue in the GitHub repository with a description and the location of the error.

Ian A. Cook
Minneapolis, September 8, 2018

Part I

Tavonic Family: Tavonic

History and Ethnography

This chapter will present a brief history of the Tavonic language family, followed by a short description of its ethnolinguistic context.

1.1 Brief History

The Tavotath (the Tavonic people) migrated to Ardusa hundreds of years ago in what they termed Year 1 of the Ardusan Era (AE). Ardusa is far from any other landmasses and is isolated from the influence of other lands and other peoples. The Tavotath landed in the warm southeastern regions of Ardusa where they first established their new home, naming this new realm *Urdeso*, a compound word meaning 'Safe Land'. Over the following centuries, the Tavotath spread westward and northward throughout the whole of Ardusa.

As the Tavotath spread, they formed several individual territories, each of which eventually developed into small kingdoms. These kingdoms constantly battled one another for power, and borders were continually shifting. Those who fled the fighting fled northward, furthering the Tavonic expansion throughout Ardusa. As the Tavotath spread farther apart and splintered, their language diverged. Two main dialects emerged, one in the north and one in the south.

After a few hundred years, one kingdom in the south emerged as dominant, conquering or allying with more and more kingdoms until, by 327 AE, the entire south of Ardusa was united under one empire. This empire enforced the usage of the language that had emerged in the south, thus forming the Alnuric language. The empire continued to push northward until it spread too thin and reached a stalemate with the allied kingdoms in the north around 371 AE. Finally, in 582 AE after a couple hundred years of relatively stable rule, the empire declined and divided again into individual territories, leaving behind six sovereign kingdoms.

While the empire was emerging in the south, the kingdoms in the north formed a loose alliance to resist its spread. The alliance managed to reach a stalemate with the empire, stopping its spread northward. The allied kingdoms together maintained the language that emerged in the north, thus forming the Redodhic language. Eventually, as the empire split in 582 AE and the northern alliance was no longer needed, the north also split into individual territories, leaving behind four sovereign kingdoms.

1.2 Ethnography

1.2.1 Demonyms and Language Names

The Tavotath were a tribe that migrated to Ardusa together, fleeing their previous home. The Tavonic word *tavo* /taˈvo/ means 'person', and so the derived word *Tavotaþ* /ta.voˈtaθ/ means 'people' or 'tribe'. In other words, the Tavotath referred to themselves as the People, with *Tavonak* being the Language of the People. The Alnuric- and Redodhic-derived words, *Tevodeþ* /te.voˈdeθ/ and *Tovujiþ* /to.vuˈd͡ʒiθ/ respectively, refer to all people who descended from the original Tavotath tribe. Both Alnuric and Redodhic are Tavotath languages and part of the Tavonic language family.

1.2.2 Ethnology

Here will be a brief ethnological description of the Tavotath.

1.2.3 Demography

Here will be a brief demographical description of the Tavotath.

Phonology

This chapter will present the inventory of consonants and vowels. An observational analysis of the Tavonic languages' syllable structures and phonotactics will follow. The chapter will close with notes on syllable stress within words and a brief exploration of intonation.

2.1 Phoneme Inventory

2.1.1 Consonants

With approximately 20 consonants, Tavonic has an "average" inventory.[1] Table 2.1 shows the full chart of consonant phonemes, along with several allophones enclosed in parentheses. Table 2.2 shows how each consonant in Tavonic is romanized.

Despite its "average" inventory of consonants, there are many more allophones that occur in the language. First, any doubled consonant is realized as a geminated (elongated) consonant.

(1) *unner* /uˈnːer/ 'empire'

Thus, example 1 above is realized with a lengthened [n]. A doubled ⟨r⟩ is similarly geminated, but the pronunciation changes from a flap/tap to a trill.

The remaining allophones occur due to various sound change processes, mostly by assimilation. For example, /n/ becomes velarized when it appears immediately before a velar consonant.

(2) *tavonga* [ta.voŋˈga] 'humanlike'

As discussed above, ⟨r⟩ can be pronounced as both a tap/flap [ɾ] and as a trill [r]. Additionally, when part of certain consonant clusters, it can be pronounced as an approximant [ɹ]. This primarily occurs when the ⟨r⟩ leads into a cluster or immediately follows a nasal.

(3) *frorgali* [fɾoɹˈga.li] 'to un-see'

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[1] Ian Maddieson, "Consonant Inventories," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/1.

2.1. Phoneme Inventory

Table 2.1: Tavonic Phonetic Consonant Inventory (allophones in parentheses)

Consonants	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Velar
Nasal	m			n		(ŋ)
Plosive		p b	t d			k g
Fricative		f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	x ɣ
Flap/Tap				ɾ		
Trill				(r)		
Approximant				(ɹ)		
Lateral				l		

Table 2.2: Tavonic Consonant Romanization

Phone	Phoneme	Romanization	English	Notes
[m]	/m/	⟨m⟩	⟨m⟩	
[n]	/n/	⟨n⟩	⟨n⟩	
[ŋ]	/n/	⟨n⟩	⟨n⟩	/n/ becomes velarized before a velar consonant
[p]	/p/	⟨p⟩	⟨p⟩	
[b]	/b/	⟨b⟩	⟨b⟩	
[t]	/t/	⟨t⟩	⟨t⟩	
[d]	/d/	⟨d⟩	⟨d⟩	
[k]	/k/	⟨k⟩	⟨k⟩	
[g]	/g/	⟨g⟩	⟨g⟩	
[f]	/f/	⟨f⟩	⟨f⟩	
[v]	/v/	⟨v⟩	⟨v⟩	
[θ]	/θ/	⟨þ⟩	⟨th⟩	
[ð]	/ð/	⟨ð⟩	⟨dh⟩	
[s]	/s/	⟨s⟩	⟨s⟩	
[z]	/z/	⟨z⟩	⟨z⟩	
[ʃ]	/ʃ/	⟨š⟩	⟨sh⟩	
[ʒ]	/ʒ/	⟨ž⟩	⟨zh⟩	
[x]	/x/	⟨ǩ⟩	⟨kh⟩	
[ɣ]	/ɣ/	⟨ǧ⟩	⟨gh⟩	
[ɾ]	/r/	⟨r⟩	⟨r⟩	
[r]	/r/	⟨rr⟩	⟨rr⟩	⟨r⟩ is trilled when doubled
[ɹ]	/r/	⟨r⟩	⟨r⟩	⟨r⟩ is occasionally pronounced as an approximant when a part of a consonant cluster
[l]	/l/	⟨l⟩	⟨l⟩	

Table 2.3: Tavonic Vowel Inventory
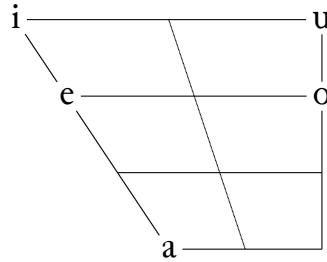
2.1.2 Vowels

Tavonic distinguishes five vowel qualities, as shown in Table 2.3, giving it an "average" inventory.[2] This means the consonant–vowel ratio is 20:5 or 4.0, which is "average".[3] Tavonic does not distinguish long and short vowels and does not allow any diphthongs.

Note that all Tavonic vowels have a very rigid acceptable pronunciation with very little variance.

(4) a. *akrinsali* 'to rewrite' is pronounced /ak.rin'sa.li/. ⟨i⟩ is not pronounced with a lax [ɪ] in closed syllables (i.e., /ak.rɪn'sa.li/)

b. *eðerik* 'pencil' is pronounced /e.ðe'rik/. ⟨e⟩ is not pronounced with an open [ɛ] in closed syllables or syllables with secondary stress or with a central [ə] in unaccented syllables (i.e., /ɛ.ðə'rik/), nor is it diphthongized to [eɪ̯] (i.e., /eɪ̯.ðe'rik/)

c. *kǎlo* 'man' is pronounced /xa'lo/. ⟨a⟩ is not pronounced with a raised [æ] (i.e., /xæ'lo/), a backed [ɑ] (i.e., /xɑ'lo/), or a centralized [ɜ] (i.e., /xɜ'lo/)

d. *esondi* 'arable' is pronounced /e.son'di/. ⟨o⟩ is not pronounced with an open [ɔ] (i.e., [e.sɔn'di]), nor is it diphthongized to [ou̯] (i.e., /e.sou̯n'di/)

e. *frumbali* 'to misunderstand' is pronounced /frum'ba.li/. ⟨u⟩ is not pronounced with an open [ʌ] (i.e., /frʌm'ba.li/) or a centralized [ʊ] (i.e., /frʊm'ba.li/)

2.2 Phonotactics

At the time of writing, there does not yet exist a sufficient corpus for a meaningful statistical analysis of Tavonic's phonotactics. Therefore, this section will present only a cursory observational analysis.

2.2.1 Syllable Structures

Syllables in Tavonic must contain a vowel to serve as the syllable's nucleus. Each syllable will only have at most one vowel. Syllables may also include any single consonant or one of a limited set of

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[2]Ian Maddieson, "Vowel Quality Inventories," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/2.

[3]Ian Maddieson, "Consonant-Vowel Ratio," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/3.

two-consonant clusters as the onset, coda, or both.

In other words, the most complex syllable structure allowed in Tavonic is CCVCC, with restrictions on the allowable consonant clusters, giving Tavonic a "moderately complex syllable structure".[4]

V

Since vowels are required to form a syllable nucleus, the most basic syllable structure is simply a vowel (V). Any syllable that starts with a vowel will occur exclusively at the beginning of a word.

(5) a. *e* /e/ 'in' or 'on'

b. *eðer* /eˈðer/ 'pen'

c. *abom* /aˈbom/ 'two'

d. *oko* /oˈko/ 'dog'

e. *usukon* /u.suˈkon/ 'possessor'

f. *ablu* /abˈlu/ 'cat'

C

A syllable can contain a single-consonant onset or coda. There is no restriction on which consonants may appear in the onset or coda with just one consonant. CV is likely the most frequent type of syllable in Tavonic, with CVC probably being the second-most-frequent syllable type.

(6) a. *ga* /ga/ 'but'

b. *lu* /lu/ 'and'

c. *mo* /mo/ 'with'

d. *ǩalo* /xaˈlo/ 'man'

e. *šeðo* /ˈʃe.ðo/ (run.PST.IND.PRG) 'was running'

f. *urda* /urˈda/ 'safe'

g. *akradir* /ak.raˈdir/ 'writing implement'

h. *esonak* /e.soˈnak/ 'citizen'

Across two syllables within a word, there are restrictions on the combination of consonants that are possible. At such syllable boundaries, a plosive[5] or a fricative[6] can be followed by a liquid[7]; a liquid may be followed by a plosive, fricative, nasal[8], or a different liquid; or a nasal can be followed by any other consonant.

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[4]Ian Maddieson, "Syllable Structure," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/12.

[5]i.e., ⟨p⟩, ⟨t⟩, ⟨k⟩, ⟨b⟩, ⟨d⟩, or ⟨g⟩

[6]i.e., ⟨f⟩, ⟨þ⟩, ⟨s⟩, ⟨š⟩, ⟨ǩ⟩, ⟨v⟩, ⟨ð⟩, ⟨z⟩, ⟨ž⟩, or ⟨ǧ⟩

[7]i.e., ⟨l⟩ or ⟨r⟩

[8]i.e., ⟨m⟩ or ⟨n⟩

(7)   a.   *elbi* /elˈbi/ 'egg'

        b.   *ongo* /onˈgo/ 'pan'

        c.   *ǩalven* /xalˈven/ '400'

        d.   *ablunga* /ab.lunˈga/ 'catlike'

CC

Syllables may contain onsets or codas with two consonants, but these shapes are less common and there are restrictions on the possible combinations. Syllable onsets with two consonants may only occur at the beginning of a word and may only contain a plosive or fricative followed by a liquid. Syllable codas with two consonants may only occur at the end of a word and may only contain a liquid followed by a plosive.

(8)   a.   *pral* /pral/ 'some'

        b.   *tloþendi* /tlo.θenˈdi/ 'permittable'

        c.   *frandi* /franˈdi/ 'visible'

        d.   *šolk* /ʃolk/ 'yet'

        e.   *delš* /delʃ/ 'zero'

2.2.2 Phonological Changes

Placeholder

2.2.3 Syllable Parsing

Placeholder

2.2.4 Number of Syllables per Word

Placeholder

2.3 Prosody

Placeholder

2.3.1 Syllable Weight

Placeholder

2.3.2 Word Stress

Placeholder

2.3.3 Intonation

Placeholder

Morphological Typology

Now that Tavonic, Alnuric, and Redodhic's phonologies have been defined in chapter 2, this chapter will discuss the next larger unit of language: morphemes. A morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit in a language. A morpheme can be a root, or it can be another element that affects or modifies the meaning of a root. Further, a morpheme may be freestanding, or it may be bound to other morphemes to form a larger word.

The discussion will begin with a general explanation of the Tavonic family's morphological typology. Following this will be a brief summary of the various morphological processes that occur in the languages, ending with an explanation of the locus of marking.

3.1   Morphological Typology

Traditional research would show that Tavonic is typologically partially isolating and partially fusional, meaning that morphemes are often either separated into distinct words or fused together such that a single phonological unit represents several morphemes. However, according to Bickel and Nichols,

> Recent research has shown that such a scale [ranging from isolating to agglutinative to fusional to introflexive] conflates many different typological variables and incorrectly assumes that these parameters covary universally.[1] Three prominent variables involved in this are phonological fusion, formative exponence, and flexivity (i.e. allomorphy, inflectional classes).[2]

Therefore, we will examine each of these areas—phonological fusion, formative exponence, and flexivity, as well as the degree of synthesis—separately.

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[1]Frans Plank, "Split Morphology: how Agglutination and Flexion Mix," *Linguistic Typology* 3 (1999): 279–340; Balthasar Bickel and Johanna Nichols, "Inflectional Morphology," in *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*, ed. Timothy Shopen, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[2]Balthasar Bickel and Johanna Nichols, "Fusion of Selected Inflectional Formatives," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/20.

3.1.1 Phonological Fusion

Tavonic's phonological formatives are partially fusional, being partially "isolating" and partially "concatenative".[3] The concatenative morphemes are phonologically bound, requiring a "host word" with which they form one single phonological word, while the isolating morphemes are "full-fledged phonological words of their own".

Verbs are almost exclusively concatenative, with tense, aspect, and mood morphemes attached directly to the verb's stem.

(1)   a.   *ufuli*
           /uˈfu.li/

           uf-uli
           sing-INF

           'to sing'

     b.   *Ufunte!*
           /uˈfun.te/

           uf-unte
           sing-IMP

           'Sing!'

     c.   *Mon ufuk.*
           /ˈmon uˈfuk/

           mon   uf-uk
           1S.TOP   sing-IND.PST.PFV

           'I sang.'

Example 1 shows how morphemes are attached to the stem of a verb through suffixes, rather than with separate (isolating) modifying words or nonlinear ablaut or tone modifications.

Example 1c similarly shows how personal pronouns are fusional. Example 2 demonstrates further how each personal pronoun simultaneously indicates the person, number, animacy in the third person, case, and whether it is the topic.

(2)   a.   *mor* /mor/ 'I' (1S.ABS)

     b.   *þeton* /θeˈton/ 'you' (2P.ACC)

     c.   *ginsek* /ginˈsek/ 'to it' (3PC.IN.TOP.DAT)

This concatenation appears not only in inflectional morphology, but also in derivational morphology. For example, the word *ablutik* /a.bluˈtik/ 'kitten' is formed from the root noun *ablu* /aˈblu/ 'cat' with a diminutive suffix attached (*ablu*-DIM). Similarly, the word *akradir* /ak.raˈdir/ 'pen' is formed from the root verb *akrali* /akˈra.li/ 'to write' with a nominalizing suffix (*akra*-NMZ).

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[3]Bickel and Nichols, "Fusion of Selected Inflectional Formatives."

Nouns, on the other hand, are exclusively isolating. All grammatical markings, including number, gender, case, and topicality, are indicated using phonologically separate prepositions.

(3) a. *No akrakon aruþ.*
/no ak.raˈkon aˈruθ/

no=   *akrakon*   *ar-uþ*
AN.SG.TOP.ABS= writer   stand-IND.NPST.PRG

'The writer is standing.'

b. *Eson moþes elbi šus ken botra draš.*
/eˈson moˌθes elˈbi ˈʃus ken botˈra ˈdraʃ/

∅=   *eson*   *moþes=*   *elbi šus*   *ken=*   *botra*   *dr-aš*
AN.SG.ABS= farmer IN.PC.TOP.ACC= egg 3S.AN.GEN AN.PL.DAT= wife   give-IND.NPST.RTSP

'The farmer has given the eggs to his wife.'

Notice in example 3 how every noun is preceded by a preposition that identifies that noun's grammatical role within the sentence.

3.1.2 Formative Exponence

Tavonic has mostly polyexponential formatives, meaning that, in almost all cases, single morphemes express multiple grammatical categories each.[4] Derivational morphemes are all monoexponential while inflectional morphemes are almost exclusively polyexponential.

(4) *Nan tavotik one vi?*
/nan taˈvoˈtik oˈne vi/

nan=   *tavo-tik*   *on-e*   *=vi*
AN.PL.TOP= person-DIM play-IND.NPST.IPFV =INT

'Do children play?'

Example 4 includes one derivational morpheme and three inflectional morphemes attached to the roots *tavo* and *oneli*, two of which are polyexponential. The preposition *nan* is a polyexponential morpheme that identifies the preceding noun's gender (animate), number (plural), and topicality. The affix *-tik*, a diminutive that derives the word 'child' from the root 'person', is a monoexponential derivational suffix. The single-letter suffix *-e* attaches to the verb to express the mood (indicative), tense (nonpast), and aspect (imperfective). Finally, the word *vi* is a monoexponential interrogative clitic that turns the sentence into a question.

Noun prepositions can additionally encode case. In example 4, the noun *tavotik* is inferred to be in the absolutive case despite being unmarked for it. In many other situations, this grammatical case

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[4]Balthasar Bickel and Johanna Nichols, "Exponence of Selected Inflectional Formatives," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/21.

is additionally encoded within the same polyexponential preposition. In example 3b, the word *moþes* indicates that the noun 'egg' is inanimate, paucal, the topic, and in the accusative case.

One noun preposition, *nut* has not fully cumulated, with the noun's number being still separated into a distinct segment.

(5) a. *nut-∅* /nut/ (AN.TOP.ACC-SG)

 b. *nut-os* /nuˈtos/ (AN.TOP.ACC-PC)

 c. *nut-on* /nuˈton/ (AN.TOP.ACC-PL)

All other noun prepositions are fully cumulated and cannot be separated into their component morphemes.

(6) a. Inanimate Ergative
   i. *ða* /ða/ (IN.SG.ERG)
   ii. *ðes* /ðes/ (IN.PC.ERG)
   iii. *dun* /dun/ (IN.PL.ERG)

 b. Inanimate Topic Dative
   i. *mǒk* /mox/ (IN.SG.TOP.DAT)
   ii. *mekos* /meˈkos/ (IN.PC.TOP.DAT)
   iii. *nikun* /ni ˈkun/ (IN.PL.TOP.DAT)

3.1.3 Flexivity

Tavonic nouns, adjectives, and verbs display flexivity, which means that these words are divided into separate classes that receive distinct inflectional allomorphs. On such allomorphs, otherwise identical morphemes take distinct phonological shapes.

Nouns are divided into animate and inanimate genders. These two genders determine which prepositions are used to provide the grammatical context of the noun.

(7) a. *ri bilt*
   /ri ˈbilt/

   ri= *bilt*
   AN.PC.ABS= breath

   'breaths'

 b. *l'eðer*
   /leˈ͡ðer/

   le=eðer
   IN.PC.ABS=pen

   'pens'

In example 7, both *bilt* and *eđer* are marked for the paucal number and the absolutive case, but because *bilt* is animate and *eđer* is inanimate, the shape of the prepositions are entirely different.

Although they are distinct, the shapes are often more closely related than in example 7. Example 8 shows the animate and inanimate forms of the plural ergative preposition; the relation between the two forms is much clearer, as only the vowel changes.

(8) a. *din bilt*
         /din ˈbilt/

din=	*bilt*
AN.PL.ERG=	breath

         'breaths'

     b. *dun eđer*
         /dun eˈđer/

dun=	*eđer*
IN.PL.ERG=	pen

         'pens'

Nouns do not show possessive flexivity, as there is no possessive classification.[5] There is only one method of forming a possessive relationship: using the genitive case.

Adjectives also show flexivity since they decline to match the gender of the noun they modify. Each adjective has a distinct animate and inanimate form, with animate adjectives ending in *-a*, *-i*, or *-u* and inanimate adjectives ending in *-e* or *-o*.

(9) a. *su frandi bilt*
         /su franˈdi ˈbilt/

su=	*frandi*	*bilt*
AN.SG.GEN=	visible.AN	breath

         'of the visible breath'

     b. *šo frando eđer*
         /ʃo franˈdo eˈđer/

šo=	*frando*	*eđer*
IN.SG.GEN=	visible.IN	pen

         'of the visible pen'

In example 9, the form of *frandi* changes depending on whether it is modifying an animate noun like *bilt* or an inanimate noun like *eđer*.

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[5]Johanna Nichols and Balthasar Bickel, "Possessive Classification," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/59.

Verbs are divided into three distinct conjugation classes, each identified by the infinitive form. Class I verb infinitives end in *-ali*, class II verb infinitives end in *-eli*, and class III verb infinitives end in *-uli*.

(10) a. Class I: *bruþat-ali* /bru.θaˈta.li/ 'to handle' (handle-INF)

b. Class II: *š-eli* /ˈʃe.li/ 'to run' (run-INF)

c. Class III: *teg-uli* /teˈgu.li/ 'to worry' (worry-INF)

Beyond just the form of the infinitive, the verb's class determines the entire conjugation paradigm for that verb.

(11) a. Class I: *bruþat-abe* /bru.θaˈta.be/ 'handling' (handle-ACT.PTCP)

b. Class II: *š-iba* /ˈʃi.ba/ 'running' (run-ACT.PTCP)

c. Class III: *teg-ube* /teˈgu.be/ 'worrying' (worry-ACT.PTCP)

As shown in example 11, the same inflection takes a different form when attached to a verb of a different class. To form the active participle, *bruþatali* becomes *bruþatabe* and *teguli* becomes *tegube*. Following this pattern, one might expect *šeli* to become **šebe*, but instead it becomes *šiba*.

3.1.4 Synthesis

As discussed in subsection 3.1.1, derivation and verb inflection occurs by attaching affixes to a stem or root, forming singular phonological words. Meanwhile, noun declension occurs using prepositions that mark the grammatical information for the noun. These prepositions are separate phonological words from the nouns themselves.

In all cases, however, inflected forms constitute singular *syntactic* words because the inflections cannot be separated or reordered at all. This means that Tavonic morphology is synthetic.[6]

Tavonic verbs normally inflect to show mood, tense, and aspect, a total of three morpheme categories per word. The maximally inflected form adds negation, a particle that is a separate phonological word but remains a part of the syntactic word of the verb, bringing Tavonic's category-per-word ratio up to 4.[7]

(12) *Šun onek bo.*
/ˈʃun oˈnek bo/

šun	*on-ek*	*-bo*
3S.AN.TOP	play-IND.PST.PFV	-NEG

'S/he did not play.'

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[6]Balthasar Bickel and Johanna Nichols, "Inflectional Synthesis of the Verb," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/22.

[7]Ibid.

3.2 Morphological Processes

Tavonic is "predominantly suffixing"[8] and primarily makes use of suffixes and clitics to derive and inflect words. The language does not employ infixation, stem modification, or suprafixation, no prefixation has yet been identified, and reduplication only appears in wordplay and child-directed speech.

3.2.1 Suffixation

Suffixes in Tavonic apply mainly to verbs. All verbal inflections occur via the addition of suffixes, whether phonologically bound or not. This is illustrated in example 13.

(13) a. *Šona git akraǧ.*
          /ʃoˈna git akˈraɣ/

          šona   *git*   *akr-aǧ*
          3p.AN.TOP   3S.IN.ACC   write-IND.PST.RTSP

          'They had written it.'

      b. *Monsa ufut oþ nikis.*
          /monˈsa uˈfut oθ niˈkis/

          monsa   *uf-ut*   *oþ*   *nik-is*
          1PC.TOP   sing-IND.NPST.PFV   if   be.able-SBJV.NPST.IPFV

          'We will sing if we are able.'

      c. *usombe akrapis*
          /uˈsom.be ak.raˈpis/

          us-ombe   *akrapis*
          hold-PASS.PTCP.IN   letter

          'held letter'

      d. *Mi þro akrorganta.*
          /mi ˈθro ak.rorˈgan.ta/

          mi   *þro*   *akrorg-anta*
          IN.SG.TOP   that.MED   erase-IMP

          'Erase that.'

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[8]Matthew S. Dryer, "Prefixing vs. Suffixing in Inflectional Morphology," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/26.

e. *Mana kantenta bo.*
/maˈna kanˈten.ta bo/

mana   kant-enta -bo
1P.TOP thank-IMP -NEG

'Don't thank us.'

As discussed in subsection 3.1.4, although the particle *bo* is a separate phonological word, it functions syntactically as a suffix. This is shown in example 13e where it attaches to the verb *kantenta* to negate it.

Suffixes are also present on adjectives, though only minimally. Adjectives take one of two vowel endings to mark the gender of its referent, with animate adjectives ending in *-i*, *-a*, or *u* and inanimate adjectives ending in *-e* or *-o*.

(14) a. *ablunga* /ab.lunˈga/ (AN) vs. *ablunge* /ab.lunˈge/ (IN) 'catlike'

b. *akrandi* /ak.ranˈdi/ (AN) vs. *akrando* /ak.ranˈdo/ (IN) 'writable'

c. *bruþatla* /bru.θatˈla/ (AN) vs. *bruþatlo* /bru.θatˈlo/ (IN) 'manual'

d. *fraþru* /fraθˈru/ (AN) vs. *fraþro* /fraθˈro/ (IN) 'observant'

Suffixation also occurs regularly in derivational inflection. In fact, several derivational suffixes can be strung together to derive yet more words. Example 15 shows this process.

(15) a. *frali* /ˈfra.li/ 'to see'

b. *fravem* /fraˈvem/ 'sight'

c. *fravemitla -o* /fra.vem.itˈla/ 'visual'

d. *onaš* /oˈnaʃ/ 'rug'

e. *onašuli* /o.naˈʃu.li/ 'to place'

f. *onašinsuli* /o.na.ʃinˈsu.li/ 'to re-place'

In example 15f, the *-ins* affix may not immediately appear to be a suffix, however it should be noted that it is being attached to the end of the *stem* of the word, which is *onaš-*, prior to the verb's infinitive ending *-uli*, which is an *inflectional* suffix.

3.2.2 Cliticization

Clitics can be difficult to define in a formal way, and it is therefore worthwhile to explain how certain morphemes in Tavonic can be classified as such.

A 'clitic' is often characterized as "a 'small', prosodically weak, or non-prominent word which fails to respect normal principles of syntactic distribution because it requires a host to which it can attach phonologically".[9] Clitics are different from affixes in that they will typically "cliticize 'promiscuously'

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[9]Andrew Spencer and Ana Luís, "The Canonical Clitic," chap. 6 in *Canonical Morphology and Syntax*, by Dunstan Brown, Marina Chumakina, and Greville G. Corbett (2012), 123–150, ISBN: 9780199604326, accessed November 25, 2018,

to a word of any old category, including uninflectable words which otherwise fail to take any affixes whatever",[10] whereas affixes are limited to only specific parts of speech to which they can connect.[11] Yet, they are different from function words in that they are bound, that is they do not have the free ordering afforded to words.[12]

The primary example of clitics in Tavonic is the noun prepositions. These particles cannot appear alone, conveying solely grammatical, not lexical, information. They are not affixes because they attach to the beginning of the entire noun phrase, no matter what word comes after, rather than attaching directly to the head noun.

(16) a. *Mod nas oko fra.*
/ˈmod nas oˈko ˈfra/

mod	*nas=*		*oko*	*fr-a*
1S.ERG	AN.PC.TOP		dog	see-IND.NPST.IPFV

'I see the dogs.'

b. *Mod nas urda oko fra.*
/ˈmod nas urˈda oˈko ˈfra/

mod	*nas=*	*urd-a*	*oko*	*fr-a*
1S.ERG	AN.PC.TOP	protected-AN	dog	see-IND.NPST.IPFV

'I see the protected dogs.'

c. *Mod nas tesar urda oko fra.*
/ˈmod nas teˈsar urˈda oˈko ˈfra/

mod	*nas=*	*tesar*	*urd-a*	*oko*	*fr-a*
1S.ERG	AN.PC.TOP	2PC.GEN	protected-AN	dog	see-IND.NPST.IPFV

'I see your protected dogs.'

d. *Mod nas su eson urda oko fra.*
/ˈmod nas su eˈson urˈda oˈko ˈfra/

mod	*nas=*	*su=*	*eson*	*urd-a*	*oko*	*fr-a*
1S.ERG	AN.PC.TOP	AN.SG.GEN	farmer	protected-AN	dog	see-IND.NPST.IPFV

'I see the farmer's protected dogs.'

Notice in example 16 how the particle *nas* directly precedes the entire noun phrase, even when separated from the head noun by an adjective (16b), a pronoun (16c), and even another modifying noun and its preposition (16d).

doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199604326.001.0001, https://www.academia.edu/4379177/The_canonical_clitic_With_Ana_Lu%C3%ADs_.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Arnold M. Zwicky and Geoffrey K. Pullum, "Cliticization vs. Inflection: English N'T," *Language* 59, no. 3 (1983): 503–505, accessed November 25, 2018, https://web.stanford.edu/~zwicky/ZPCliticsInfl.pdf.

[12]Arnold M. Zwicky, "Clitics and Particles," *Language* 61, no. 2 (1985): 286–290, accessed November 25, 2018, http://babel.ucsc.edu/~hank/mrg.readings/zwicky1985.pdf.

In some cases, the noun prepositions reduce phonologically and attach to the following word. Any time a noun preposition ends with the same vowel with which the following word begins, that vowel is dropped and the preposition is attached orthographically to the following word with an apostrophe.

(17) a. *le eðer → l'eðer* /le'ðer/ 'pens' (IN.PC.ABS-pen)

  b. *mati inam → mat'inam* /ma.ti'nam/ 'location' (IN.SG.TOP.ACC-location)

  c. *no oko → n'oko* /no'ko/ 'dog' (AN.SG.TOP-pen)

  d. *su urda ablu → s'urda ablu* /sur'da ab'lu/ 'of the protected cat' (AN.SG.GEN-protected-AN cat)

This phonological reduction occurs no matter whether the following word is the noun the preposition is modifying or not. For example, notice in example 17d that the preposition attaches itself to *urda* even though it is an adjective modifying the noun *ablu*.

The other main example of cliticization is the particle *vi*. It is used to ask questions and is most often added at the end of a sentence after the verb, as shown in example 18.

(18) *No šekon tu fraþru oko usu vi?*
  /no ʃe'kon tu fraθ'ru o'ko u'su vi/

no=	*šekon*	*tu=*	*fraþr-u*	*oko*	*us-u*	*=vi*
AN.SG.TOP=	runner	AN.SG.ACC=	observant-AN	dog	have-IND.NPST.IPFV	=INT

  'Does the runner have an observant dog?'

A speaker can, however, move the interrogative particle earlier in the sentence to focus the question on some specific element.

(19) a. *No šekon vi tu fraþru oko usu?*
    /no ʃe'kon vi tu fraθ'ru o'ko u'su/

no=	*šekon*	*=vi*	*tu=*	*fraþr-u*	*oko*	*us-u*
AN.SG.TOP=	runner	=INT	AN.SG.ACC=	observant-AN	dog	have-IND.NPST.IPFV

    'Is it the runner who has an observant dog?'

  b. *No šekon tu fraþru vi oko usu?*
    /no ʃe'kon tu fraθ'ru vi o'ko u'su/

no=	*šekon*	*tu=*	*fraþr-u*	*=vi*	*oko*	*us-u*
AN.SG.TOP=	runner	AN.SG.ACC=	observant-AN	=INT	dog	have-IND.NPST.IPFV

    'Is it an *observant* dog the runner has?'

  c. *No šekon tu fraþru oko vi usu?*
    /no ʃe'kon tu fraθ'ru o'ko vi u'su/

no=	*šekon*	*tu=*	*fraþr-u*	*oko*	*=vi*	*us-u*
AN.SG.TOP=	runner	AN.SG.ACC=	observant-AN	dog	=INT	have-IND.NPST.IPFV

    'Is it an observant *dog* the runner has?'

3.3 Locus of Marking

Tavonic is almost exclusively dependent-marking.[13] This can readily be seen in the expression of possessive relationships, where the dependent is marked with the genitive case.

(20)   a.   *tes botra*
             /ˈtes botˈra/

             tes   *botra*
             2S.**GEN** wife

             'your wife'

       b.   *su esobiš botra*
             /su e.soˈbiʃ botˈra/

             su=   *esobiš* *botra*
             AN.SG.**GEN**= patriot wife

             'the patriot's wife'

In example 20a, 'you' are grammatically in possession of *botra* 'wife'; the possessee forms the head of the phrase while it is modified by the possessor, which receives the genitive inflection. In example 20b, *botra* is still the possessee and thus the head of the phrase while the genitive is marked on the dependent, *esobiš* 'patriot', using a noun preposition.

Tavonic also shows dependent marking when modifying nouns with adjectives.

(21)   *ran ǩalonža botra*
       /ran xa.lonˈʒa botˈra/

       ran=   *ǩalonž-**a***   *botra*
       AN.PL.**ABS**= husbandless-**AN** woman

       'husbandless women'

In example 21, while the head noun *botra* is marked for animacy with *ran*, the dependent modifying adjective *ǩalonža* 'husbandless' takes the *-a* animate ending to match.

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[13]Johanna Nichols and Balthasar Bickel, "Locus of Marking: Whole-language Typology," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/25.

At the clause level, Tavonic is solely dependent-marking. Verbs have no grammatical inflections that indicate the grammatical role of any noun phrases within the clause, with that information being marked only on the verb's dependents, the noun phrases.

(22) a. *Mon usuš.*
/ˈmon uˈsuʃ/

mon *us-uš*
1S.**TOP** sing-IND.NPST.RTSP

'I have sung.'

usuš

mon

mon *usuš*
DEPENDENT HEAD

b. *Mon þet kante.*
/ˈmon ˈθet kanˈte/

mon **þet** *kant-e*
1S.**TOP** 2S.**ACC** thank-IND.NPST.IMP

'I thank you.'

kante

mon **þet**

mon **þet** *kante*
DEPENDENT DEPENDENT HEAD

c. *Nas arb usuš.*
/nas ˈarb uˈsuʃ/

nas= *arb* *us-uš*
AN.PC.**TOP**= bird sing-IND.NPST.RTSP

'The birds have sung.'

usuš

arb

nas

nas *arb* *usuš*
DEPENDENT HEAD

d. *Do su botra ǩalo mi tavofre alma frak.*
/do su botˈra xaˈlo mi taˈvofˈre alˈma ˈfrak/

do= *su*= *botra* *ǩalo* **mi**= *tavofr-e* *alma* *fr-ak*
AN.SG.**ERG**= AN.SG.GEN= woman husband IN.SG.**TOP**= inhabited-IN house see-IND.PST.PFV

'The woman's husband saw the inhabited house.'

frak

ǩalo   *alma*

do   *botra*   **mi**   *tavofre*

su

do   *su*   *botra*   *ǩalo*   **mi**   *tavofre*   *alma*   *frak*

DEPENDENT   DEPENDENT   HEAD

In example 22a, the pronoun *mon* is declined to indicate it is the topic of the sentence while the verb *usuš*, despite conjugating for mood, tense, and aspect, is not marked for this role. Example 22b similarly marks the two pronouns *mon* and *þet* for their roles in the sentence as topic and object while the verb *kante* does not inflect to indicate these roles. When nouns are used instead of pronouns, as in examples 22c–d, the nouns are marked for their grammatical role by their prepositions, their own dependents, while the head verb remains unmarked for these roles.

Grammatical Categories

Tavonic words can be divided into several different categories, or parts of speech. While the previous chapter dealt with the general mechanisms of marking words, this chapter will examine each of the various parts of speech in order to define their morphology more closely. The discussion will begin with an examination of nouns, pronouns, and verbs. Following this will be a discussion of the remaining parts of speech, including adverbs, numerals, and conjunctions.

4.1 Nouns

Nouns in Tavonic decline to express number and gender (animacy) and are marked for case to indicate their grammatical role within the clause. As discussed in chapter 3, this inflection takes place not directly on the noun itself but on prepositional clitics that convey this grammatical meaning.[1] For a full illustration of the declension paradigms, compare Table 4.1 and Table 4.2. As shown in these tables, Tavonic noun inflections are never syncretic.[2]

4.1.1 Gender

Grammatical gender in Tavonic consists of two[3] non-sex-based[4] classes based primarily on semantic ontological properties.[5] The animate gender refers primarily to entities that are considered alive or

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[1]Matthew S. Dryer, "Position of Case Affixes," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), https://wals.info/chapter/51.

[2]Matthew Baerman and Dunstan Brown, "Case Syncretism," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/28.

[3]Greville G. Corbett, "Number of Genders," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), http://wals.info/chapter/30.

[4]Greville G. Corbett, "Sex-based and Non-sex-based Gender Systems," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), https://wals.info/chapter/31.

[5]Greville G. Corbett, "Systems of Gender Assignment," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), https://wals.info/

Table 4.1: Tavonic Animate Noun Declension Paradigm for the word *bruþa* 'hand' or 'tool'

	SG	PC	PL
ABS	*bruþa*	*ri bruþa*	*ran bruþa*
ERG	*do bruþa*	*das bruþa*	*din bruþa*
ACC	*tu bruþa*	*tos bruþa*	*ton bruþa*
DAT	*ke bruþa*	*kas bruþa*	*ken bruþa*
GEN	*su bruþa*	*sar bruþa*	*san bruþa*
TOP	*no bruþa*	*nas bruþa*	*nan bruþa*
TOP.ACC	*nut bruþa*	*nutos bruþa*	*nuton bruþa*
TOP.DAT	*nek bruþa*	*nekas bruþa*	*naken bruþa*
TOP.GEN	*nus bruþa*	*nosar bruþa*	*nosan bruþa*

Table 4.2: Tavonic Inanimate Noun Declension Paradigm for the word *šem* 'busyness'

	SG	PC	PL
ABS	*šem*	*le šem*	*ren šem*
ERG	*ða šem*	*ðes šem*	*dun šem*
ACC	*ti šem*	*þis šem*	*ten šem*
DAT	*ǩo šem*	*kos šem*	*ǩun šem*
GEN	*šo šem*	*se šem*	*šen šem*
TOP	*mi šem*	*mes šem*	*nun šem*
TOP.ACC	*mati šem*	*moþes šem*	*noten šem*
TOP.DAT	*moǩ šem*	*mekos šem*	*nikun šem*
TOP.GEN	*miš šem*	*mise šem*	*nušen šem*

are associated with life, movement, change, or dynamism. The inanimate gender refers primarily to entities that are not alive and are generally stationary or abstract. Grammatical gender in Tavonic can also be referred to as "animacy" since that is what the genders denote. Examples of nouns in each gender can be seen in example 1.

(1)   a.   Animate nouns:
          botra 'woman', *ǩalo* 'man', *eson* 'farmer', *okotik* 'puppy', *urdatil* 'ward', *bilt* 'breath'

      b.   Inanimate nouns:
          esotik 'country', *dedu* 'sky', *elbi* 'egg', *usudir* 'basket', *akrapis* 'letter', *fradir* 'glasses'

Since the nouns themselves are not directly inflected, with grammatical information instead shown on prepositional particles, it is impossible to tell what gender a noun is based solely on its word form.

Some nouns are able to change category in certain circumstances. For example, plants and animals switch from the animate gender to the inanimate gender when they serve as food. Further, there exist some duplicates with otherwise identical words declining to opposite genders.

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4.1.2 Number

Grammatical number in Tavonic consists of three numbers, all of which are coded on the noun prepositions.[6] The singular is always used when there is only one of the referent noun, the paucal is used when there are two to five of the referent noun, and the plural is used when there are more than five of the referent noun.

(2)   a.   *su ima* /su iˈma/ 'of mother' (SG.AN.GEN= mother)

   b.   *sar ima* /sar iˈma/ 'of (some) mothers' (PC.AN.GEN= mother)

   c.   *san ima* /san iˈma/ 'of (several) mothers' (PL.AN.GEN= mother)

When a numeral is used to identify the number of a referent noun, the singular is used instead of the paucal or plural, even if without the numeral the other forms would be used.[7]

(3)   a.   *k'eþ ima* /keθ iˈma/ 'to one mother' (SG.AN.DAT=one mother)

   b.   *ke arsi ima* /ke arˈsi iˈma/ 'to three mothers' (SG.AN.DAT= three mother), not *kas arsi ima

   c.   *ke bruð abom ima* /ke bruð aˈbom iˈma/ 'to seven mothers' (SG.AN.DAT= five two mother), not **ken bruð abom ima*

Most nouns that represent concrete entities are countable, including some words that in English are uncountable like corn, and by default they are used in the singular form unlike English words like pants or glasses. However, many entities that are not easily split into discreet parts like liquids, grains, and certain abstract concepts are uncountable, such as *elto* /elˈto/ 'water'. Occasionally, when a word's semantics cover multiple concepts, a word can be variably countable or uncountable; when *dedu* /deˈdu/ is used to mean 'sky' or 'heaven', it is uncountable, but when it is used to mean 'ceiling', it is countable and can be made paucal or plural.

People's names can also be declined to the paucal or plural number to indicate the associative plural.[8] This form is used to refer to a person and the other people associated with that person. For example, *ri Bol* /ri bol/ (PC.AN.ABS Bol) refers to Bol and two to five other people associated with him. Similarly, *ran Ote* /ran oˈte/ (PL.AN.ABS Ote) refers to Ote and the group he is with.

4.1.3 Case

As shown in Tables 4.1 and 4.2, Tavonic noun phrases decline to five different grammatical cases[9] in order to show their role in the sentence. These cases are governed by the phrase's verb or assigned

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[6]Matthew S. Dryer, "Coding of Nominal Plurality," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), https://wals.info/chapter/33.

[7]Martin Haspelmath, "Occurrence of Nominal Plurality," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), https://wals.info/chapter/34.

[8]Michael Daniel and Edith Moravcsik, "The Associative Plural," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), https://wals.info/chapter/36.

[9]Oliver A. Iggesen, "Number of Cases," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), https://wals.info/chapter/49.

to adjuncts depending on their purpose or meaning. As shown in the same declension tables, any of these grammatical cases can be replaced by or combined with topic markers. See subsection 4.1.4 for more information on topicality.

Absolutive

The absolutive case marks a noun or noun phrase that serves as the subject of an intransitive verb. This means that when a verb has only a single argument, that argument will by default be in the absolutive case. That is true whether the subject is serving like an agent as in words like *šeli* 'to run' or *ufuli* 'to sing' or when the subject is serving more like a patient as in words like *orðali* 'to fall'.

(4) a. *Mollur šeþ.*
/moˈlːur ˈʃeθ/

∅=   *Mollur š-eþ*
AN.SG.ABS= Mollur run-IND.NPST.PRG

'Mollur is running.'

b. *R'ima ufu.*
/riˈma uˈfu/

ri=ima   *uf-u*
AN.PC.ABS=mother sing-IND.NPST.IMP

'The mothers sing.'

c. *Ren fild orðak.*
/ren ˈfild orˈðak/

ren=   *fild   orð-ak*
IN.PL.ABS= doll fall-IND.PST.PFV

'The dolls fell.'

Ergative

The ergative case marks a noun or noun phrase that serves as the subject of a transitive verb. This means that when a verb has multiple arguments, the subject argument will by default by in the ergative case. That is true whether the subject is serving like an agent as in words like *eðerali* 'to write' or *okotali* 'to hunt' or when the subject is serving more like a patient as in words like *frali* 'to see'.

(5) a. *Do Tlunda ti akrapis eðeraš.*
/do ˈtlunˈda ti akˈraˈpis e.ðeˈraʃ/

do=   *Tlunda ti=*   *akrapis eðer-aš*
AN.SG.ERG= Tlunda IN.SG.ACC= letter   pen-IND.NPST.RTSP

'Tlunda has penned a letter.'

b. *Das oko tu ablu okotam.*
/das oˈko tu abˈlu o.koˈtam/

das=	*oko*	*tu=*	*ablu*	*okot-am*
AN.PC.ERG=	dog	AN.SG.ACC=	cat	chase-IND.PST.IMP

'The dogs chased the cat.'

c. *Din avo ten usudir fraǧ.*
/din aˈvo ten u.suˈdir ˈfraɣ/

din=	*avo*	*ten=*	*usudir*	*fr-aǧ*
AN.PL.ERG=	father	IN.PL.ACC=	basket	see-IND.PST.RTSP

'The father and his associates had seen the baskets.'

4.1.4 Topicality

How does topicality work?

4.2 Pronouns

Tavonic pronouns are symmetrical to other noun phrases.[10]

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[10]Oliver A. Iggesen, "Asymmetrical Case-Marking," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*, ed. Matthew S. Dryer and Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, 2013), https://wals.info/chapter/50.

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Syntax

How do words go together?

Lexical Operations

6.1 Compounding

How does compounding work?

6.2 Derivation

How do you make new words?

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How does conversation work?

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Tavonic Reference Grammar

Here is a reference grammar for Tavonic.

Part II

Tavonic Family: Alnuric

History and Ethnography

This chapter will present a brief history of the Alnuric language, followed by a short description of its ethnolinguistic context.

9.1 Brief History

Here will be a brief historical description of the Alnureth.

9.2 Ethnography

9.2.1 Demonyms and Language Names

For hundreds of years, the empire ruled in the southern region of Ardusa. The Tavonic word *unner* /unˈner/ 'empire' evolved into the Alnuric word *alnur* /alˈnur/. *Alnurek* /al.nuˈrek/ 'Alnuric' takes its name from this word. Meanwhile, the Redodhic name for the empire is *nonar* /noˈnar/, and its name for the Alnuric language is *Nonrik* /nonˈrik/. Similarly, the Alnuric and Redodhic names for the Alnuric people are *Alnureþ* /al.nuˈreθ/ and *Nonriþ* /nonˈriθ/ respectively.

9.2.2 Ethnology

Here will be a brief ethnological description of the Alnureth.

9.2.3 Demography

Here will be a brief demographical description of the Alnureth.

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Alnuric Reference Grammar

Here is a reference grammar for Alnuric.

Part III

Tavonic Family: Redodhic

History and Ethnography

This chapter will present a brief history of the Redodhic language, followed by a short description of its ethnolinguistic context.

17.1   Brief History

Here will be a brief historical description of the Redodhith.

17.2   Ethnography

17.2.1   Demonyms and Language Names

In the north, the alliance resisted the empire's expansion. The Tavonic word *aroltutaþ* /aˌrol.tuˈtaθ/ signifies 'alliance', however the alliance instead used the simpler form *arutaþ* /a.ruˈtaθ/ 'standers' to signify the alliance of those kingdoms standing against the empire. *Arutaþ* evolved into the Redodhic word *rejiþ* /reˈd͡ʒiθ/, and *Redoðik* /re.doˈðik/ 'Redodhic' takes its name from this word. The Alnuric name for the alliance is *eradeþ* /e.raˈdeθ/, and its name for the Redodhic language is *Eratþek* /e.ratˈθek/. Similarly, the Redodhic and Alnuric names for the Redodhic people are *Redoðiþ* /re.doˈðiθ/ and *Eratþeþ* /e.ratˈθeθ/ respectively.

17.2.2   Ethnology

Here will be a brief ethnological description of the Redodhith.

17.2.3   Demography

Here will be a brief demographical description of the Redodhith.

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Redodhic Reference Grammar

Here is a reference grammar for Redodhic.

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What metaphors do the vocabulary convey?

Language is a tool. I speak *with* or *using* Tandi, rather than just speaking Tandi.

B

Kinship

C

Names

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